

frequently during the fall than at any other time. It winters rarely in the mountains and quite commonly among the rocky cliffs about Lombard.

194. **Hylocichla fuscescens salicicola**. WILLOW THRUSH.—Common summer resident in willow thickets in the valleys. It arrives late in May and leaves in August.

*195. **Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni**. OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH.—Common summer resident in the mountains, arriving about June 1 and leaving early in September. Occurs regularly in the valleys during migrations.

196. **Hylocichla guttata auduboni**. AUDUBON'S HERMIT THRUSH.—Summer resident in the mountains. Quite rare and usually above 7,000 feet.

*197. **Planesticus migratoria propinqua**. WESTERN ROBIN.—Common summer resident, occurring in valleys and mountains up to 8,000 feet. This species arrives in the middle of March and leaves late in October. It winters rarely. I observed one at Three Forks, Feb. 12, 1910.

198. **Sialia currucoides**. MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD.—Common summer resident in the valleys and lower mountain peaks below 6,500 feet. This species arrives early in March and leaves in November.

THE PASSENGER PIGEON INVESTIGATION.¹

BY C. F. HODGE.

AT THE meeting of this Union a year ago a plan was projected and has since been developed to secure adequate search of the American continent for this lost species. If any consider this a "fool's errand," I may add that at that time I put the question fairly to the Union as a body and to a number of you personally: "Do you think that scientifically adequate search has been made for *Ectopistes migratorius*?" Not a decisive affirmative answer was offered, and, among others, Dr. C. Hart Merriam replied distinctly that he did not.

¹ Read at the meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union held in Washington, D. C., Nov. 14-17, 1910.

The plan is familiar to you all, but one or two points in it require restatement and emphasis. Up to that time rewards were in the field, offered, we may be pardoned for supposing, by good men with a healthy dash of Irish blood in their veins, for a freshly killed pigeon to prove that the species was still alive. I pointed out the "bull" to the effect that even a flock of pigeons, flying rapidly over the country as they do, might be wiped out, each observer taking a single bird.

The new plan called for discovery and confidential and exclusive notification of undisturbed nesting pairs or colonies. Just on this point the newspapers have not been as careful as they should in stating that the rewards were offered for "nests." In consequence, of course, nests, fortunately of Mourning Doves, began coming to me by express. If the reporter was a bit more careful and said "*undisturbed nests*," I received notification of "*undisturbed nests*" deserted, the birds having reared their young and moved on.

Since the investigation is undertaken solely with the purpose of discovering breeding pigeons *in time* to secure to them absolute protection, no such claim, however meritorious, could be treated as valid. The newspapers have contributed good service to the cause by disseminating notices, but, with three or four notable exceptions, the service might have been far greater, if their reporters had been clear-headed enough to have grasped this essential purpose of the investigation. The investigation is in reality "news" for the American continent — "bad news" if no pigeons can be discovered, "good news" if they are found; and I have endeavored to furnish the papers accurate information as to progress of the search. I must, however, bespeak added care in stating the one essential point that all rewards are offered for information of undisturbed *nesting pairs or colonies* — occupied nestings — of Passenger Pigeons. Not a reward can be paid for anything else.

I also regret to add that some confusion, delay, and possible annoyance has been caused by many papers failing to state to whom information is to be sent. In this way the editor of 'The Auk,' members of the Smithsonian Institution and Department of Agriculture have been caused additional correspondence. I wish to thank all who have helped thus far and to say that I hope

no such confusion will be permitted to occur in future. With such large money prizes involved, it is necessary that one person assume all ultimate responsibility.

It was, of course, expected a year ago that one season's search would settle the matter definitely one way or the other. However, negative evidence is proverbially inconclusive. I have to show you two nests — I might have brought many more — of the Mourning Dove and one nest of probably a Sharp-shinned or Pigeon Hawk, some Mourning Dove feathers and wings, but not a nest or even a feather of the long lost *Ectopistes migratorius*. Not an award has been successfully claimed. What is the reason or sense in prolonging the misery?

In the first place I find myself in the position of the man who was holding the bear. He could not let go. No time limit has been set in any of our announcements so that, in order to keep faith with the public, we must let the awards stand for at least one more season. With a full year's notice, it may be advisable to print in our next announcement that the investigation is to close definitely on October 1, 1911, and that all offers of rewards not claimed by that date will be called off. With the general stirring up the matter has had this year, the observations of another season ought to settle the case for all time.

Although we have no tangible evidence to show, the testimony for the season is greater in amount than for any one year since 1900. After sorting out the season's correspondence I have as possibly true for pigeons seen during 1909 and 1910 reports as follows: From Ontario, 10; from Pennsylvania, 9; from Massachusetts, 8; from New York, 4; from Michigan, 3; from Iowa, 2; and from Illinois, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Manitoba, 1 each. As a last hope it was thought that these reports might be made to support one another by indicating, when plotted on a map, a consistent course of one or more flocks of pigeons migrating over the continent. So few of these reports, however, give definite data as to number in flock or direction of flight that even this slight hope finds little or no support. The absence of any definite word from reputable naturalists or ornithologists, American or Canadian, is another extremely discouraging and ominous feature of this season's investigation.

Thus what on the surface appear to be the most encouraging reports, in which flocks of hundreds or even thousands of the pigeons have been seen, forfeit all credence on account of their isolation. If, as one report states, the pigeons were nesting in "almost countless numbers" — somewhere in northern United States or Canada (I do not wish to know where until informant is able to report occupied nestings) during the present season, it seems utterly incredible that, in flying to or from their roost, either in feeding or in migrations, they should not have been seen by many others. Another discouraging feature of this year's work is the total absence of reports from the Southern States. If flocks of pigeons are in existence, they ought to be most easily and frequently observed in their southern winter range. Except for unlikely reports from the mountains of western Texas, the Southland has been one vast silence the entire season.

It now looks as if the worst fears of American naturalists were about to be confirmed and that we are "in at the death" of the finest race of pigeons the world has produced.

In the campaign of next season it is proposed to appeal especially to the students and school children, college and university, high school and public school, of this country and Canada, making it thus distinctively educational. Then the awakening to the problem, the bird study necessary to enable one to identify pigeons, if discovered, the wholesome field work will each be worth vastly more to the country at large than the mere cost of this investigation, even if no pigeons are discovered. A number of other valuable species demand united and effective protection, if they are to be saved from extermination.

My own personal expense for postage, printing, office supplies and stationary and for trips to investigate claims has been a little over \$100. I said a year ago that I would willingly give this amount to see a live Wild Pigeon or even to be practically assured that the species is extinct. I am willing to renew this sacrifice for one more season. The only other men who have been put to serious expense in this work are Charles K. and Chester A. Reed of Worcester, who have spent \$400 on the colored plate and leaflet which has been widely circulated. My grateful acknowledgments are also due to Mr. Dutcher and the National Associa-

tion of Audubon Societies for preparation of the colored plates of the Passenger Pigeon and Mourning Dove. It is to be hoped that renewed effort for another year may result in what may be generally considered an adequate search of the continent for *Ectopistes migratorius*.

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A DESCRIPTION OF THE WILD PIGEONS WHICH VISIT
THE SOUTHERN ENGLISH COLONIES IN NORTH
AMERICA, DURING CERTAIN YEARS, IN
INCREDIBLE MULTITUDES.

BY PEHR KALM.¹

Translated by S. M. Gronberger.

IN North America there is a species of wild Pigeons which, coming from the upper part of the country, visits Pennsylvania and others of the Southern English settlements during some years, and in marvelous multitudes.

They have, however, already been described and exceedingly well illustrated in lively colors by the two great ornithologists and matchless masters of bird-drawing, Catesby and Edwards; but as I have had occasion to notice with regard to the description proper and especially as regards the living habits of these Pigeons various things which these gentlemen have either left entirely unmentioned, or which at their places of residence they have not been able properly to ascertain, it is my desire to deliver a short account of this subject before the Royal Academy of Sciences, using the notes from my American Diary.

The *names* given by ornithologists to these Pigeons are as follows:

¹ Translated from Kongl. Vetenskaps-Akademiens Handlingar, för år 1759, Vol. XX. Stockholm, 1759.

See also explanatory comment by Dr. Theodore Gill respecting this account of the Passenger Pigeon by Kalm, under 'General Notes' (*postea* p. 110).—EDD.